

**UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS LOWELL
CENTER FOR LOWELL HISTORY
ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION**

**MOGAN CULTURAL CENTER
LOWELL NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK
UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS LOWELL
KHMER ORAL HISTORY PROJECT II**

**INFORMANT: KAK KORNG [CAMBODIA]
INTERVIEWER: MEHMED ALI
TRANSLATOR: UNKNOWN MALE
DATE: APRIL 3, 2006**

A = ALI

T = TRANSLATOR

C = COURTNEY

TCK = COURTNEY TRANSLATING FOR HER FATHER KAK

TCS = COURTNEY TRANSLATING FOR HER SISTER UNNAMED

Tape 06.01b

Note: Courtney will now translate for her father Kak Korng and her sister who is unidentified. “TCK” will be used when she is translating for Kak Korng, and “TCS” will be used when she translating for her sister. “C” will be used when Courtney is commenting.

TCS: My sister say that at that time they were told that the Thai Prince will come in a helicopter and distribute rice to people. (A: Yup) She said at that time she did not see any rice, but like she thinks maybe somebody else did get any. But she say for her personally there was no food being offered.

A: Were you with your father at this time?

TCS: She said she didn't even know him at that time.

A: Oh okay. Okay. So back to the question of why the Thai people didn't want the Cambodians to come?

C: Yah, my sister said something about it.

TCS: She said during that time the Thai people, they have weapons. And like every time there's a girl run off try to find food, they always, they always kidnap her to rape her and

kill her. And they rape and kill off a lot of Cambodian girls. And at night they come in with the flashlight to, to look for girls you know, to, you know, to whatever, kill them. All they know at that time those people, that they were in Thailand, but they don't know who those people were.

A: Okay. Okay. Okay, so which camp did you go? I'm sorry, what was the fellow's name that saved you guys, American?

TCK: James. (C: J A M E S) What's his last name? He said he gave them his contact info, but he said he lost it. All he has left is the picture.

A: Okay. So his name was James?

C: Yah.

A: Okay.

C: And he said that he lived in Texas.

A: Okay. So when he met with James did he go into a refugee camp at that point?

TCK: Yah, he said that the U.N. car went to pick them up from the bus, from the forest and the woods. Yah, to bring, to bring those people out of the forest into (--)

TCS: She said at that time Vietnam and Khmer Rouge were killing each other. So they have to run and yah.

A: Okay. How long did you stay in the camp?

TCK: Five years.

A: Wow. And what did you do during that time? Did you do your medicine?

TCK: Oh yah, he said he did. James asked him to do it, and he has that certificate.

A: Okay. Is James' name on that certificate?

TCK: He said the name on the certificate was someone else's, like not from James.

A: And was he able to, was he able to save a lot of people?

TCK: He said like during that time, every day like from morning till night he just helped people. Like people's bullet wombs, crazy, insane, etc. No hand, no feet left.

TCS: Yah, because they bring these people into hospital in Khao-I-Dang and he treat, he help treated them.

A: Wow. So any interesting stories from the camp?

TCK: He said something that catches his attention was that kid that helped him out the first time. So it made him want to learn more. It made him more religious and want to learn meditation, yah, meditation and whole, the ethics. The ethics. Just like an ethical thing you have to hold when you are, adhere by religious, the Buddhist religious traditions.

A: Umhm. Umhm.

TCK: And he became very religious after coming past the child, because he believed that the child was some sort of magical child to help them. He said, that's him, that's my mom, that's her, that's Jennie, that's Daisy, and that's his son. And that time I wasn't born yet. That's my mom.

A: Where?

C: Oh that's my, my sister is right here.

A: No where is this taken?

TCK: That's in Takeo, Thailand.

A: Oh, okay. So where did, where did you go after you left the camp?

TCK: Came here!

A: And where did you go first?

TCK: New York?

A: New York?

TCK: Yup.

A: City?

TCS: Yup, New York City.

A: And where in the city did you live?

All: In the Bronx.

TCK: Fifteen years there.

A: Fifteen years. (C: Umhm) And what year did you come, 1985?

TCS: January 1, 1986

C: She says 1986

TCK: Yup, January 1986.

A: And so you came to Lowell after that?

TCK: Yes. He said something about James, and he allowed them to study in [Trimbury].

A: In where?

TCK: [Trimbury], before they were, make it here.

TCS: When he got to New York in the beginning, he saw a newspaper article with him in it, about how he was a doctor and helped people during the time.

A: Wow.

TCS: She said somebody brought it to show it to him, and then they took it back.

A: And you never saw it?

C: They don't remember what magazine, what newspaper. All they remember, they don't know English so all they remember was seeing the image, it's a picture of him.

TCK: He said during that time people came and interviewed him several times, even from Germany.

A: Oh really?

TCK: Yah, they even make copies of the [unclear] paper. He said that [unclear]. He said when the king was in power there was no war, nothing, it was fun. There's no, not even any thieves, or any robbery, or anything.

A: Hm. What did you do for work in New York?

TCK: He said he was just at the temple being a [unclear]. I don't know what the English word is for it. You're not exactly a monk, but like, yah, like just very important person in the temple.

A: Okay. And there was a Wat in New York?

TCK: Yah, yah, there was. There was one in the Bronx, and one in Brooklyn.

A: Okay. Do maybe the equivalent name is deacon.

C: Ah, yah.

A: Of that word you said.

C: Yah, I didn't know what the word was. Deacon I guess.

A: Deacon is somebody that helps out at the temple.

C: Umhm.

A: When you got to New York did you start doing medicine right away?

TCK: He said, yes he did, but only for anyone who knows, and anyone from, who used to be from the camp who remember him. They come back and occasionally need some help. But yes.

A: And could he find all of the ingredients for the medicine there?

TCK: He said that he doesn't charge people. If they want to give him money it's fine, if they don't, it's okay. It's like if you want to you know, just give donation it's okay. If you don't have money, it's okay. He doesn't care.

A: Yah. Did he have the ingredients in New York?

TCK: He said yes.

A: Where did they have it? At the Chinese stores, or Cambodian?

TCK: He said he got them from Cambodia, but yah, he said, yah, sometimes they have some in Chinatown, but sometimes he'd go to Cambodia and he'd get them.

A: Okay.

TCK: He said that he'd bring them to the Chinese store and they'd know what it is. So they would just give it to him. And the person who he's treating will pay for the ingredient, and he'll just bring it home and make it for them.

A: Um, um, um. Why did you come to Lowell?

C: Because I come to school here.

A: Really? Is that true?

C: Yah, and they, they, I guess the family wanted to stay together, or something.

A: So you went to school in Boston?

C: Yah, I went to Tuft's University.

A: Tuft's. Okay. And did you move to Lowell, or you were living in Boston at that time?

C: Um, I was in New York. I just come to school here, and shortly after they moved here too.

A: Okay. Any final stories you want to share?

TCK: He said he doesn't want to say too much, because if he says too much he's afraid that stories he says might offend like a certain group of people, and they might hurt his relatives still in Cambodia, something like that. Like offend you know, maybe Thai or Vietnamese, or something

A: Well we can keep the tape closed until after a while if he wants, or he can remain anonymous.

TCK: Yah, he say I still have a lot of relatives there and it might put their life in danger if certain things come out might offend the people, the government. Yah, like you know, the story might get to someone, make them upset. They know who your relatives are. They will hurt those people. Yah.

A: Okay. Well tell him we'll be back and we want to talk more about the medicines.

C: Okay.

TCK: He said yes, it's fine. He doesn't mind talking about the medicine. He said the only thing he doesn't know is surgery.

A: Okay. [Unclear] Thank you very much. Thank you Courtney. (Courtney: Thank you) Good job.

C: You think so? Ah yah!

End of Interview